

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 1-12 have been cancelled and claims 13-27 have been added. Accordingly, claims 13-27 are pending in the present application.

The objections to claims 9, 10 and 12 are noted. With the cancellation of these claims, this objection is deemed moot.

Claims 1 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Kurita et al. (EP '973). Claims 1-4 and 9-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Munn et al. (US '721) or Toda et al. (EP '759). Claims 5-8 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Munn et al. or Toda et al. in view of Vangala et al. (US '329) or Atokawa et al. (JP '207). Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kurita et al. in view of Vangala et al. or Atokawa et al. With the cancellation of claims 1-12, these rejections are deemed moot.

Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 13-27 patentably distinguish over the art of record for the reasons set forth below.

CLAIMS 13-21

Among the limitations of independent claim 13 which are neither discloses nor suggests the prior art of record is a composite dielectric filter device which includes “an outer-conductor-free portion formed at a part of the outer conductor corresponding to a boundary between the at least two mutually adjacent filters” and “an input/output terminal shared by the at least two mutually adjacent filters, wherein at least a part of the input/output terminal is provided on the first face of the dielectric block and is isolated from the outer conductor, and each of the inner conductors of the groups of adjacent inner conductors are directly connected to each other by the outer conductor along the first face of the dielectric block.”

With this arrangement, the coupling between the ground currents of the adjacent filters (i.e., the inductive coupling between the ground current of one of the filters and the ground current of the remaining filter) can be suppressed. As a result, the isolation characteristics between the mutually adjacent filters is improved.

Neither Kurita et al., Munn et al., Toda et al., Vangala et al. nor Atokawa et al., either alone or combined, teach or suggest the claimed arrangement of the input/output terminal, the mutually adjacent inner conductors, and the location of these elements relative to the faces of the dielectric block. In particular, none of the cited references, either alone or combined, teach or suggest that at least part of the input/output terminal is provided on a first face of the dielectric block to which the inner conductors extend and that the inner conductors are directly connected to each other by the outer conductor along the first face as required by independent claim 13. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 13 patentably distinguishes over the art of record.

Claims 14-21 depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 13 and include all of the limitations found therein. Each of these dependent claims include additional limitations which, in combination with the limitations of the claims from which they depend, are neither disclosed nor suggested in the prior art of record. Accordingly, claims 14-21 are likewise patentable.

CLAIMS 22-27

Among the limitations of independent claim 22 which are neither disclosed nor suggested in the prior art of record is a composite dielectric filter device which includes “an outer-conductor-free portion formed at a part of the outer conductor corresponding to a boundary between the at least two mutually adjacent filters” and “an input/output terminal shared by the at least two mutually adjacent filters” wherein:

at least a part of the input/output terminal is provided on a third face of the dielectric block which is parallel to the plurality of inner conductors and is isolated from the outer conductor,

the outer-conductor-free portion is arranged continuously with a periphery of the input/output terminal and is provided on both the third face of the dielectric block and a fourth face of the dielectric block which is opposite the third face, and

the first face of the dielectric block is an open-circuited face and does not include the outer conductor at a portion between the at least two mutually adjacent filters.

With the outer-conductor-free portion continuous with the periphery of the input/output terminal, the effect of suppressing the coupling between the ground currents of the adjacent filters is enhanced.

Neither Kurita et al., Munn et al., Toda et al., Vangala et al. or Atokawa et al., either alone or combined, teach or suggest the claimed combination of elements as required by independent claim 22. In particular, none of the cited references, either alone or combined, teach or suggest that the outer-conductor-free portion is continuous with a periphery of the input/output terminal and is provided on both the third face of the dielectric block and a fourth face of the dielectric block which is opposite the third face as required by independent claim 22. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 22 patentably distinguishes over the art of record.

Claims 23-27 depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 22 and include all of the limitations found therein. Each of these dependent claims include additional limitations which, in combination with the limitations of the claims from which they depend, are neither disclosed nor suggested in the prior art of record. Accordingly, claims 23-27 are likewise patentable.

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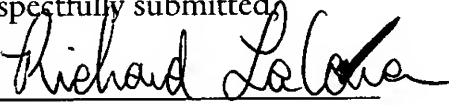
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The prior art made of record and not relied upon has been carefully reviewed. It is believed that these references, either alone or combined with any other references of record, do not render the pending claims unpatentable.

In view of the foregoing, favorable consideration of new claims 13-27, and allowance of the present application with claims 13-27 is respectfully and earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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